

RESOLUTION
Reexamination Report
Princeton Community
Master Plan

RESOLUTION OF THE
REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD OF PRINCETON
MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS, that the Regional Planning Board of Princeton has been organized in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-77 et seq, and;


WHEREAS, the Regional Planning Board has the statutory power to prepare a Master Plan pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-84 subject to the obligation to provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development ordinance and is required to prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such reexamination pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, and;

WHEREAS, the Master Plan Committee has recommended that the Regional Planning Board adopt the Reexamination Report draft dated October 18, 2001, and;

WHEREAS, notice was duly given and a public hearing was held on October 18, 2001, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Regional Planning Board of Princeton does hereby adopt the Reexamination Report draft dated October 18, 2001 (as amended at the hearing) for the Princeton Community's Master Plan.

This 18th day of
October, 2001


Ilene Cutroneo, Secretary

PRINCETON COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN 2001 REEXAMINATION REPORT

Introduction

Every six years the Municipal Land Use Law (Chapter 291, Laws of N.J. 1975, amended) (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et. seq.) requires that the governing body shall provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the Planning Board. The law goes on to require that a reexamination be completed at least once every six years from the previous reexamination.

On November 30, 1995, The Princeton Regional Planning Board adopted the Princeton Community Master Plan Reexamination report, and on December 12, 1996, the 1996 Princeton Community Master Plan was adopted with subsequent amendments through May 6, 1999. The 1996 Master Plan expresses community goals for the use of Princeton's land and facilities.

The primary theme woven through each element in the Master Plan emphasizes balance and human scale. The 1996 Master Plan identified the shortage of vacant, easily developed land and noted that "the debate over sites for affordable housing, senior housing as well as the development of parks and schools is just the beginning of a series of increasingly difficult choices that the Princetons must make between competing social goals." (page 7 Princeton Community Master Plan).

The 1996 Princeton Community Master Plan was meant to represent the collective thinking of the Princeton Community on its growth and development as well as its vision for the future. The 1996 Master Plan was a strategic plan to guide our future and a policy tool for retaining and enhancing the special character, values, and quality of life that are fundamental to our community. A major purpose of the 1996 Princeton Community Master Plan was to express community goals for the use of Princeton's land and facilities. Guided by a broad community consensus, these goals included meeting the community's affordable housing obligation, meeting age restricted senior housing needs, providing for educational needs, preserving open space, developing adequate recreation facilities, preserving historic buildings and sites, and retaining Princeton's small-town atmosphere. The Master Plan also sought to preserve the existing character, mix, and densities of commercial, residential, and other land uses in Princeton.

The purpose of this report is to discuss how well the 1996 Master Plan anticipated the community's needs to date and to document the Planning Board's 2001 Reexamination of the 1995 Reexamination, of the 1996 Master Plan, of Princeton development regulations, and to identify those areas in need of change. Following adoption of this report the Planning Board will undertake a detailed review of the changes recommended and amend the Master Plan.

The law (Section 40:55D-89) requires that the reexamination report shall state:

- The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.
- The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.

The 1995 Reexamination and 1996 Master Plan recognized that, for the first time in our history, Princeton was facing a shortage of vacant, easily developable land. This shortage began to show itself in increased competition among a variety of issues about the future use of the remaining undeveloped land. The debate about sites for affordable housing, age restricted housing, and preservation of land, as well as the development of recreation facilities and schools was just the beginning of a series of increasingly difficult choices that the Princetons had to make. A newer problem facing the community was the character of redevelopment.

Housing - Balancing housing needs with concerns about traffic, environmental issues, and neighborhood protection were major goals of the land use, conservation, and housing elements. Providing affordable housing to comply with the New Jersey Supreme Court's Mount Laurel decisions was a priority for Princeton. Both communities continue to struggle with ways to provide additional affordable housing opportunities. In the Borough, the appropriate density for new units on Shirley Court and Maclean Street was a major concern, and in the Township the completion of Griggs Farm and construction of 16 units on West Drive were major objectives. While not part of either community's submitted affordable housing plan, the construction of 58 low income age-restricted housing units behind Elm Court was a goal for both communities.

Other housing objectives included: protecting the scale and integrity of existing neighborhoods from incompatible land uses or changes in density; maintaining and enhancing the diversity of residential options; and providing opportunities for age restricted housing.

Traffic Circulation - The continuing growth in the Princeton region increased the volume of traffic and placed a greater demand on local streets. Our two-lane, tree-lined streets were jammed beyond capacity by regional traffic. These traffic pressures threatened the residential character of many of our roadways. In 1995 the Board's primary traffic circulation objective was to develop a peripheral roadway system around Princeton that would allow through traffic to bypass our residential streets and congested central business district. Other major traffic circulation objectives were the reduction of automobile trips in town by utilizing bikeways, sidewalks, and mass transit facilities.

Specific circulation goals in the 1996 Master Plan included the following.

- Protecting existing neighborhoods from through traffic as well as addressing noise, vibration, speed, safety, size, and weight of trucks on Route 206.
- Balancing land use with the capacity of the circulation systems.
- Eliminating interstate trucks from local streets.
- Developing ways to better manage traffic.
- Reducing auto dependency.
- Encourage development of peripheral parking for CBD employees.
- Maximizing the use of local bus and specialized transit services.
- Protecting and maintaining scenic gateways.

- Improving safety, creating better and more pathways, and integrating bicycle lanes on existing roadways.
- Limiting roadway improvements to a scale that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Utilizing traffic-calming techniques.

Economic Development - Ensuring the economic well being of both the Borough's central business district and the Township's shopping center were major objectives of the land use element. Balancing the intensive land uses embodied in the Borough's Business zones and Township's Office Research and Service zones with neighborhood protection and traffic circulation concerns were also major objectives in the 1996 land use and circulation elements. The community identified redevelopment as an issue to be considered.

The Master Plan recognized that many institutions in Princeton may expand and that keeping these expansions to an appropriate scale for a given area will continue to be a major focus. The continued expansion of institutional and educational uses into existing residential neighborhoods and commercial areas erodes the tax base and destroys the fabric of small-scale neighborhoods.

Other commercial goals included the following.

- Utilizing design standards to guide the scale, bulk, mass, and height of buildings.
- Developing parking strategies for both long- and short-term parking in the downtown.
- Encouraging the shopping center to improve existing building facades, review parking design, and setback requirements.

Environment - Guiding growth away from environmentally sensitive areas and directing it to more suitable locations was a major objective in the land use, open space, and conservation plan elements of the 1996 Master Plan. Areas in need of preservation and protection included the Princeton Ridge along the Township's northern border, floodplain and wetlands flanking the Stony Brook and Lake Carnegie, waterways, and areas of steep slope. The community's goal of preserving 25 percent of the community as open space continued as a goal. Another major problem was developing a stable source of funding that would permit the community to acquire environmentally sensitive properties that were threatened by development.

Historic Preservation - Identifying and protecting the many historic sites within the community was a major objective of the historic preservation element. This objective was also supported in the land use, open space/recreation, and conservation elements. The importance of preserving historic roads and bridges as gateways into the Princeton community was addressed in the circulation element.

Other goals listed in the 1996 Master Plan include the following.

- Reviewing all historic district boundaries and their design standards.
- Preparing additional nominations to the State and National Registers.
- Educating the public on historic resources.
- Identifying historic preservation buffer districts

Recreation/Open Space - The protection and acquisition of open spaces was a major goal in the 1996 Master Plan. Techniques to preserve open space were discussed in the open space/recreation and conservation elements of the Master Plan. Providing a stable source of funding for open space acquisitions was a major issue.

Other goals included the following.

- Making better use of existing active recreational areas.
- Providing additional active recreation areas.
- Providing indoor athletic facilities.
- Enhancing access to open spaces.
- Providing a network of greenways connecting open spaces.

Community Facilities - The Princeton community continues to be adequately served by a comprehensive system of municipal services that include public utilities, police and fire protection, emergency services, the public library, public health, public school system, and recreational and cultural facilities.

Major objectives were the following.

- Provision of a consolidated public works garage including the Borough, Township and Schools.
- Constructing a new/renovated municipal buildings and community center.
- Construction of a new downtown library.
- Providing for future school site(s)
- Developing a public art commission to promote and encourage awareness of the arts.

Energy Conservation - Promoting the construction of energy efficient homes, offices, and public buildings was a goal of the utility element. The circulation element promoted expansion of public transportation opportunities, ridesharing, remote parking and alternative to automobiles such as walking and bicycling.

Regional Development - Development in surrounding communities, was identified as having a major impact on the Princeton community's quality of life. Impacts were felt from large developments along Route 1, as well as in Hopewell, Lawrence, Plainsboro and Montgomery Townships. The Master Plan's major objective was to work to develop regional solutions to the traffic and land use impacts from these developments with surrounding municipalities. Opportunities for open space linkages with surrounding communities was also a master plan objective.

Utilities/Infrastructure - The provision of adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of the Princeton community was a primary concern of the 1996 Master Plan. Ensuring adequate water supply for residential use and fire fighting capabilities continued as a major focus of the utility plan element. The Master Plan also identified the need to direct growth into areas served by public sewer and water.

Other goals listed in the 1996 Master Plan include the following:

- Encouraging recycling.
- Conserving energy in residential, commercial, and transportation areas.
- Developing strategies to ensure all utilities are underground.
- Controlling the quantity and quality of storm water run off from new development.

The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to November 30, 1995.

Housing - Both communities have made significant strides in complying with their affordable housing requirements. Preserving the diversity of housing in Princeton remains a challenge, and both communities have undertaken major efforts to preserve and expand their affordable housing stock.

A total of 38 affordable housing units were constructed in the Township since the 1995 re-exam, and 11 low and moderate income units rehabilitated. The completion of the final 68 units in Griggs Farm resulted in 22 affordable housing units and the construction of Karin Court provided 16 additional units. The Township continues its policy of purchasing affordable units when a qualified buyer is not immediately available and then reselling the units to a qualified individual. This policy ensures that affordable units remain a part of the community's housing stock. The Township requires contributions for affordable housing from all new developments. The Township has signed a regional contribution agreement with the City of Trenton that provided funding for 23 affordable units (total cost \$460,000).

In the Borough of Princeton, a total of 12 new housing units were constructed with the completion of the units on Shirley Court and Maclean Street. Six of these units (3 at each site) are affordable housing units. The Borough also funded rehabilitation of 20 affordable units at Franklin and Maple Terrace. The Borough continues to receive revenues into its Affordable Housing Trust fund.

Both the Borough and Township continue to focus on the housing needs of our senior residents. A new assisted living facility was constructed in the Township and the Quarry Street Nursing home has started construction of a new facility in the Township. Both communities have taken steps to permit the construction of 68 low-income age restricted units located on land in both the Borough and Township behind Elm Court. Discussions continue on strategies to provide additional age-restricted housing.

Protecting existing neighborhoods from incompatible development continues to be a concern. Pressure on the scale and integrity of residential neighborhoods has increased in recent years, and both communities have seen smaller homes torn down and replaced with larger homes. Applications for in-fill development have increased, and ensuring new development that is harmonious with existing neighborhoods remains a concern.

Traffic Circulation - Due to Princeton's central location, the community continues to be heavily impacted by increasing regional traffic. A cooperative effort between Princeton, neighboring communities, the county, state, and regional authorities is essential to expand efficiently the regional road system to handle the expected traffic volumes. Through our efforts the NJDOT established the Central New Jersey Transportation Forum, which brings local elected officials together to discuss regional development and circulation issues.

Both communities have taken steps to channel regional traffic away from Princeton by lowering posted speed limits and reducing truck weight limits where appropriate. The Borough has implemented a number of traffic calming strategies to slow vehicle speed on Mercer, Hodge, and Prospect Streets.

In 1995 and 1996, our central transportation policy was to shift the burden of through traffic away from the residential areas and the congested core of Princeton by assembling an informal peripheral roadway system around the community. This policy remains valid today. However, the lack of any progress on Route 92 raises concerns whether this strategy can be implemented.

Concerns have also been raised regarding NJDOT's proposal for a new overpass and alignment of Washington Road at Route 1. This new alignment may exacerbate existing traffic problems by directing more traffic into the heart of Princeton and may also cause significant environmental damage. An Environmental Impact Statement is currently underway for this project.

Developing alternative means of transportation remains an unmet objective. A comprehensive bikeway study is currently underway, and a committee consisting of local elected officials and public and private schools is discussing ways of reducing the number of children driven to school. The Mercer County Transportation Management Association (TMA) was consulted to examine the feasibility of providing a jitney bus service in Princeton. However, concern over cost has prevented the implementation of any service. The TMA also worked on a program to provide free bicycles in various locations throughout the community as a way to reduce vehicle trips.

The Borough commissioned a study on several key downtown intersections and examined ways to reduce traffic bottlenecks and ease traffic congestion. As a result, construction plans are being prepared to enlarge the intersection of Witherspoon and Wiggins Streets. A new traffic light has been installed at Paul Robeson Place and John Street.

The Borough has also completed a study on the design and financial feasibility of constructing a parking garage on Borough owned surface parking lots in the downtown area. Both of these studies could have significant impacts on local traffic circulation. The feasibility of jitney service and peripheral parking for central business district employees must be investigated further.

Economic Development - Both the Borough's central business district and the Township's shopping center remain economically healthy. These areas have seen recent renovations to existing stores and infrastructure. Efforts to facilitate the provision of adequate parking in the Borough's business district remains a high priority, and Borough Council has recently taken steps to provide for a new parking garage in the CBD. The construction of a new parking garage with additional development in the heart of the downtown could have significant impacts on the community. The continued economic well-being of both these areas remains an important objective of the Master Plan.

In addition to these two core areas, redevelopment and increased activity has begun to occur along the Neighborhood Business and Service Business zones along Nassau Street in the Borough. In the

Township, additional office development has occurred in the office zones along Bunn Drive and in the service zones along Alexander Road and Route 206 in the northern portion of the Township.

Environment - The community made major strides in furthering the many environmental goals and objectives found in the Master Plan. Chief among these was the passage of open space taxes in both the Borough and Township. The Borough tax will raise over \$100,000 and the Township tax over \$450,000 annually. The tax rate in the Borough is one cent per one hundred dollars to assessed value and two cents per one hundred dollars in the Township. These taxes provide stable sources of funding for acquisition and preservation of land. The Township has been very successful leveraging municipal funds with state, county, and private donations to secure over 900 acres of land. Additional lands have been permanently preserved through the subdivision and site plan process. Lands preserved include the Institute Woods, Mountain Lakes/Tusculum (addition), R.W. Johnson property, Coventry Farm, Fieldwood, Woodfield Reservation (addition), Smoyer Park and various private open spaces in the Ettl Farm, Fieldwood, and Rushbrook developments. With these recent acquisition the community is very close to meeting its goal of preserving 25 percent of our land as open space.

In addition to acquisition, both communities passed ordinances restricting the cutting and clearing of trees.

The Township witnessed the construction of a new golf course on 212 acres of land that has become a model for other communities in terms of turf and pesticide management. The development of the golf course helps preserve from development almost 200 acres of land.

Historic Preservation - The Princeton Community has identified the majority of the historic properties and sites within the community. Our focus continues to be protecting historic sites and properties. A new historic district, the King's Highway, has been placed on the State and National registers. This district includes portions of Route 27 and Route 206 through Princeton. Cottage Club on Prospect Street in the Borough was placed on the National Register. The Borough passed an ordinance to establish buffer/transition zones around historic properties. The Township is currently negotiating to purchase the Gulick Farm which contains one of the oldest buildings in Princeton. Both communities have been designated as certified local governments by the State Office of Historic Preservation.

Recreation/Open Space - The community made major strides in meeting the goals and objectives of the open space and recreation element. The passage of an open space taxes in the Borough and Township have provided a stable sources of funding for acquisition and preservation of land. Since the 1995 Reexamination over 900 acres of land have been permanently preserved through acquisition in fee and/or conservation easements as well as through the dedication of open space during the subdivision and site plan process. These lands include the Institute Woods, R.W. Johnson property, Coventry Farm, Fieldwood, Woodfield Reservation (addition), Smoyer Park and various private open spaces that have been permanently preserved. Planning is currently underway to construct 5 to 8 play fields on portions of some of these lots.

Community Facilities - With the passage of an \$80 million building referendum in 2001 the Princeton Regional Schools established a policy calling for major renovations and additions of all the existing school sites. The School Board has determined that all future school needs will be met within the existing school sites. A remaining question is the status of the Valley Road building.

Both communities addressed shortcomings in their existing municipal buildings. The Borough undertook major renovations to their existing space and the Township is constructing a new building.

A new and larger library will be constructed at the current library's location on Witherspoon and Wiggins Streets. This decision ensures that the library provides a vibrant anchor for this corner of the downtown for many years to come.

The Borough Council has decided that a parking garage should be constructed on the Park and Shop lot of Witherspoon Street to provide additional parking in the downtown. The Council is currently evaluating the financial implication of constructing a municipal parking garage. Once constructed, this facility will provide parking in the downtown area.

Energy Conservation - The recently passed school bond referendum will permit the Princeton Regional Schools to install new energy-efficient features throughout the schools. Princeton University has constructed a co-generation plant to help meet its energy needs.

The Planning Board continues to evaluate proposed development regarding building location, height bulk and shadows.

Regional Development - Development in communities surrounding Princeton continues to have a major impact upon the Princeton community. The Route 1 corridor from I-295 to Route 130 has developed into a major retail and office center. Since our 1995 Reexamination and 1996 Master Plan, a number of regional shopping centers and office parks have been constructed or expanded in this corridor. Residential and office development to the north of Princeton along Route 206 has also begun to impact the Princeton community. We need to develop regional strategies for land use and traffic circulation.

Utilities/Infrastructure - Ensuring that the Princeton Community has adequate infrastructure to serve the needs of the community without adversely affecting the environment or quality of life in Princeton remains an ongoing problem. Both communities have adopted ordinances regulating personal wireless telecommunication facilities and equipment. The intent of these ordinances is to limit visual impacts from cellular towers on the Princeton Community.

Significant progress has been made in obtaining our goals for providing adequate water supply, sewer service, solid waste and recycling pick-up, and for the conservation of energy.

Water Supply

Ensuring adequate water supply was a major concern during the early 1990's due to recurring drought conditions as well as accelerated residential and commercial development. Improvements made by Elizabethtown Water Company during the 1990's provide an adequate supply of water. The community routinely requires new developments to submit fire-flow tests to guarantee that adequate water pressure is available. The replacement of outdated fire hydrants is also required. The Water Company continues to work with community to strengthen the supply of water and replace old water lines when roads are reconstructed.

Sewer Service

The Stony Brook Regional Sewer Operating Authority (SBRSA), located on River Road in Princeton Township, has recently completed upgrades to their plant that provide a slight increase in capacity, provide better treatment of waste, and reduce odors from the plant.

The maintenance and operation of the sewer collection system is the responsibility of the Joint Sewer Operating Committee (SOC), which comprises representatives from the Borough and Township. Routine upgrades of existing sewer pump stations have occurred.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Borough contracts for twice a week pick-up of solid waste for all its residents. Township residents must contract for waste pick-up privately. Both communities participate in a county-wide recycling program that provides bi-weekly curbside pick-up of all recyclable material. The Township maintains a recycling facility at the Princeton Shopping Center as an additional convenience to residents. The Princeton community currently recycles slightly more than 50 percent of its solid waste.

Both the Borough and Township participate in a composting facility with Lawrence Township which processes leaves, trees stumps, and branches into mulch.

The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in state, county and municipal policies and objectives.

Density and distribution of population and land uses - Overall, the density and distribution of population and land use has not changed significantly from the last re-exam and 1996 Princeton Community Master Plan. The majority of new units in the Township were constructed at a relatively low density and complied with local zoning and planning ordinances.

The table below shows the change in population and housing units for the Borough and Township between 1990 and 2000. The Borough population increased by 2,187 persons from 12,016 in 1990 to 14,203 in 2000. The number of housing units remained fairly stable with a decrease of 19 units.

The Township population increased by 2,831 persons from 13,196 in 1990 to 16,027 in 2000 and the number of housing units increased by 670 units. It would appear that much of the population increase in the Township is the result of these new housing units.

U.S. Census Population and Housing Units 1990 - 2000				
	Population		Housing Units	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Princeton Borough	12,016	14,203	3,514	3,495
Princeton Township	13,196	16,027	5,554	6,224

Township Committee has asked the planning board to consider whether high-density age restricted housing can be constructed in areas historically zoned for single-family homes on three-acre or four-acre lots. Additional sites are being considered where mixed-use development is appropriate such as in the downtown and at the shopping center.

Housing conditions - In general, the Princeton community's housing stock is in excellent condition. Houses in the Borough are generally older than that in the Township. The 1990 census revealed that the median year housing units were built in the Borough was 1939 and 1958 in the Township.

According to the 2000 Census data approximately 44.5% of the Borough's and 68.2% of the Township's occupied housing is owner-occupied. This represents a slight increase in owner-occupied units for both the Borough and Township.

Housing values continue to rise in both communities and exceed county and statewide averages. The average market value of a residential property in Princeton Township was \$366,500 in 1995 and \$425,600 in 2000. Retaining affordable and moderate-income housing units remains an important policy of the Princeton Community.

With the exception of isolated instances of overcrowding, there are few deficient housing units in Princeton. Both communities provide a housing rehabilitation program for low and moderate-income individuals. At the time of the last master plan and re-examination approximately 8% of our total housing units were affordable. With the completion of Griggs Farm, Karin Court, Shirley and Maclean Streets this percentage continues today. Both the Borough and the Township continue to make progress in meeting their objectives in their respective fair share housing plans.

The 2000 Census indicates that the Borough lost 19 housing units and the Township gained 670 units. The 12% increase from 1990 to 2000 in the Township and the minor decrease in the Borough do not change any of the underlying assumptions regarding housing found in the master plan.

Circulation - Due to increased impact from regional development our circulation policy continues to address three distinct categories of mobility problems: internal circulation, regional circulation, and interstate/inter-regional circulation. Internal circulation addresses the mobility needs of Princeton residents and how they get to work, shopping, recreational, and cultural areas within Princeton. Regional circulation addresses the mobility needs of those people who have one trip-end in Princeton; whether they are residents, employees, customers or persons utilizing Princeton's educational, cultural, commercial or recreational facilities. Interstate/inter-regional circulation addresses those trips passing through Princeton, but do not begin or end in Princeton.

The 1995 Re-examination and 1996 Princeton Community Master Plan recommended channeling through-traffic to higher-capacity facilities on the periphery of town such as Province Line Road. These plans also recommended that circulation improvements be consistent with the human scale, historic and residential character of Princeton. These basic policies remain in effect today and are guiding our involvement in the Route 92 and Penns Neck/Washington Road projects.

The New Jersey Turnpike Authority has undertaken design work for the construction of a portion of State Route 92 from Exit 8A to Route 1. This project has been delayed as the Authority undertakes additional environmental studies. The extension of Route 92 as a two-lane facility from Route 1 to Route 206, north of Princeton should also be considered.

Improvements currently underway to Route 1 and the roads which serve it, will increase capacity and reduce congestion on Route 1. The Princeton community is concerned that the proposal to realign Washington Road over Route 1 may channel additional traffic into the heart of Princeton. This would be in direct opposition to one of our central policies of directing through-traffic to peripheral roads. Additional concerns have been raised regarding the environmental impacts from this road and its impact on well established neighborhoods along Harrison Street.

As traffic congestion worsens in the area, encouraging alternatives to automobile trips takes on a greater importance. Traditional public transit as well as paratransit services should be reviewed and expanded where appropriate. A system of pedestrian and bicycle paths throughout the community should be encouraged. A free bike program has been initiated but has not been successful.

Conservation of natural resources - Guiding growth away from environmentally sensitive areas and directing it to more suitable locations continues to be a policy of the Planning Board. The community is rapidly approaching its goal of preserving 25% of the land area as open space. The development of a stable source of funding for open space has led to the preservation of over 200 acres in the last three years. As the Princeton community approaches build-out, consideration should be given to the maintenance of our open space and to creating better open space linkages.

Energy conservation - Promoting the construction of energy efficient homes, office and public buildings remains an objective of the Princeton community. The Community continues to explore alternatives to single occupancy vehicles.

Collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials - Both the Borough and Township participate in Mercer County's recycling program. As an added convenience the Township operates a recycling facility at the Princeton Shopping Center which accepts newspaper, cardboard, paper, aluminum, glass and metal cans.

State, county and municipal policy changes - The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) was adopted March 1, 2001. The Princeton Community was an active participant in the development of the SDRP. The SDRP is intended to serve as a guide for public and private sector investment in New Jersey and as a policy document to guide state and local agencies planning.

A portion of the Princeton Community has been designated as a Regional Center. The SDRP defines Regional Centers as a compact mix of residential, commercial, and public uses, serving a large surrounding area and developed at intensity that makes public transportation feasible. The majority of the regional center in Princeton is developed.

The state plan also designates large masses of land that share a common set of conditions, such as population density, infrastructure, level of development, or natural systems into one of five planning areas. Each planning area has a series of policy objectives that guide the application of the SDRP. None of these designations preclude development.

Within our boundaries are the following planning areas:

Suburban Planning Area (PA2)

This area includes the entire Borough and the more densely populated portions of the Township. The intent of this area is to provide for much of the state's future development; promote growth in Centers and other compact forms; protect the character of existing stable communities; protect

natural resources; redesign areas of sprawl; reverse the current trend toward further sprawl; and revitalize cities and towns.

Fringe Planning Area (PA3)

This area includes the lower density populated areas of the Township. The intent of these areas is to: accommodate growth in Centers; protect the Environs primarily as open lands; revitalize cities and towns; protect the character of existing stable communities; protect natural resources; provide a buffer between more developed Metropolitan and suburban planning areas and less developed rural and environmentally sensitive planning areas; and confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers.

Rural/Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA4B)

This area includes the lands preserved by the purchase of the development rights for the Institute Woods on either side of Quaker Road. The intent of these areas are to: maintain the Environs as large contiguous areas of farmland and other lands; revitalize cities and towns; accommodate growth in Centers; promote a viable agricultural industry; protect the character of existing, stable communities; and confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers.

Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA5)

This area includes the lands located in the northern portion of the Township and often referred to as the Princeton Ridge. This area also corresponds to the RA and RB zones in the Township. The intent of these areas are to: protect environmental resources through the protection of large contiguous areas of land; accommodate growth in centers; protect the character of existing stable communities; confine programmed sewers and public water services to centers; and revitalize cities and towns.

For the most part the planning areas in the 2001 SDRP correspond to the planning areas found in the 1992 plan. The changes in the SDRP have not altered the assumptions, policies and objectives that formed the basis for Princeton's 1995 Reexamination, 1996 Master Plan, and development regulations. The Princeton community's planning efforts were consistent with the 1992 SDRP and remain consistent with the 2001 SDRP.

The Mercer County Planning Board adopted a Growth Management Plan in 1986 that represents the master plan for the physical development of Mercer County. The county's Growth Management Plan includes plans for transportation, open space and recreation, and water quality. Over the years this plan has been amended and updated. The underlying policies and objectives of the county plan as they relate to development within the Princeton community are in general agreement. We continue to disagree with some of the policies and objectives found in the county plan for communities surrounding Princeton. There have been no major shifts in policies at the County level that warrant significant changes in the Princeton community's assumptions, policies and objectives.

The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.

Throughout this re-examination report we have discussed changes that have occurred in the Princeton Community. Some of these changes are readily apparent, others less apparent, and some are just beginning to be felt. While there have been changes, many issues continue to be in the forefront of our planning. The community continues to wrestle with the following:

- A shortage of vacant developable land to meet the many competing needs in the community.
- Maintaining affordable housing.
- Meeting the housing needs of a growing senior population.
- Maintaining a range of housing opportunities to ensure a diverse population at all age and economic levels.
- Providing adequate recreation and open space.
- Ensuring an economically healthy downtown and shopping center.
- Balancing institutional needs with neighborhood protection.
- Limiting traffic impacts from regional traffic.

This re-exam recommends that the Princeton Community Master Plan be updated to address the above issues, and incorporate the following items, along with any other issues that come to light upon detailed review and public comment.

A. Land Use

Non Residential Development

1. The zoning for the Princeton Shopping Center should be reviewed, with a view towards developing it as a mixed-use zone. This zone could permit age restricted and other types of housing such as affordable housing, and market rate housing, as well as additional nonresidential development.
2. A review of zoning and development along Nassau Street from Bayard Lane, east to Harrison Street should be undertaken. This review should include capacity analysis, density concerns, historic preservation, development of design standards, and traffic circulation.
3. The service zones along Alexander Road, Route 206, and Nassau Street should be studied to determine if these areas function as service zones or if a new zone designation would be more appropriate.
4. The areas around existing mixed-use zones and nonresidential zones in both the Borough and Township should be examined to determine if these areas need additional protection, have changed and require rezoning, or should be considered for mixed-use development. In the Township the Professional Office-Residence and the Shopping Center zones along Harrison Street and in the RB zones along Witherspoon and North Tulane Streets in the Borough should be reviewed first.

5. The construction of a 400- to 500-space parking garage in downtown Princeton will have an impact on land uses in this area. The Planning Board should review its objectives, policies and zoning for the CBD zone to determine if any changes are warranted based upon the anticipated impacts from the garage.
6. Uncompleted development in the Borough's PUD zone first received approval almost 20 years ago. The underlying assumptions for this zone and the full development contemplated should be reviewed in light of existing conditions in the downtown area.

Institutional Uses

1. The Princeton Medical Center has requested that the long term needs of the medical center's main facility be considered. Additional study and discussion is warranted to determine the extent, if any, of any permitted expansion at the Medical Center.
2. The Planning Board has identified the sites containing the Merwick Unit of the Medical Center, Princeton University's Stanworth development, and the Princeton YM/YWCA as areas that could be redeveloped. Additional study is warranted to review redevelopment potential and to examine what impacts there might be on the John-Witherspoon neighborhood.
3. An update of the long range plans of Princeton University, Princeton Theological Seminary Westminister Choir College, and The Institute for Advanced Study regarding long term development in and around their campuses should be completed. Ensuring that any development at these institutions is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods is critical to the well being of the community.
4. The extension of University Place along the Dinky track and the development of this area should be studied for possible inclusion in a revision to the land use element and the development of a new zone designation.
5. The Quarry Street Nursing home will be relocated to Bunn Drive within the next year. The reuse of the current building will have an impact on the immediate neighborhood, and plans for the reuse of the building should be discussed.

B. Housing

1. The housing element should be revised to include innovative ways to meet the needs of a growing senior population.
2. Maintaining housing that is affordable to all income levels continues to warrant further study and action.
3. Maintaining the existing character of our neighborhoods should be ensured through the development of additional zoning controls on the height, setback, and bulk of homes. Large homes that are out of scale with their neighborhood should be discouraged.
4. Consideration should be given to developing drainage and lighting standards for all residential dwellings.
5. Developing standards for plan review prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition of a single family home should be considered.

6. Rezone to permit an appropriate expansion of Elm Court on the existing lots and on the adjacent lot to the west.

C. Circulation

1. A revision to the existing pedestrian and bicycle section of the circulation element is currently underway. Upon completion of this plan it should be adopted as part of the Princeton Community Master Plan.
2. Regional traffic continues to be a primary issue for the Princeton community. The Board should continue to monitor state and county activities regarding proposed highway improvements along Route 206, Route 1, Washington Road, and Route 92. The circulation element should be amended once more is known about these projects.
3. The extension of University Place should be evaluated for potential safety and circulation improvements as well as land use impacts.
4. Develop a vision for local solutions to local traffic issues.

D. Utility Services

1. The recently passed school bond referendum will permit the Princeton Regional Schools to install new, energy-efficient features throughout the schools. The Board of Education should be encouraged to maximize energy conservation during their reconstruction projects.
2. Undersized storm drains and water lines should be replaced.
3. New or upgraded utility services should be buried underground whenever possible.
4. Both communities should continue to address inflow and infiltration problems along sewer lines.
5. The community's cable provided should be encouraged to provide broadband cable access.
6. Explore the adequacy of source, supply and distribution of electricity.

E. Community Facilities

1. A community center, in one or more facilities, for our senior citizens, young people, and community at large was identified as a pressing community need. With the rehabilitation of the Borough municipal building, reconstruction of the Suzanne Paterson Center and construction of a new Township municipal building, the need for a community center should be reevaluated.
2. The Board of Education has begun to study possible uses for the portion of the Valley Road School Building being vacated by the Township. Any recommendation should be incorporated into the Princeton Community Master Plan in light of overall community needs.
3. A joint public works garage for the Borough, Township, and Board of Education should continue to be investigated.
4. Should the Arts Council vacate their building on Witherspoon Street, the future use of this facility should be considered.

F. Open Space, Recreation and Conservation

1. Community land acquisition goals and priorities should be reviewed to insure all properties have been identified.
2. A review of our open-space policies, goals, and objectives should be undertaken in light of the need to maintain existing facilities.
3. Identification of additional areas for small parks and public gardens.

G. Historic Preservation

1. Historic buffer/transition zones should be identified and created.
2. Additional historic districts should be delineated where warranted.
3. The boundaries and descriptions of existing districts should be examined to determine if additional properties should be included and to evaluate the overall contribution of each property to the district as a whole.
4. The impact of in-fill and redevelopment on the historic districts should be evaluated and guidelines developed for both the Borough and Township.
5. Restudy the significance of historic structures and districts by re-evaluating and supplementing previous surveys.

H. Development Regulations

1. The regulation of home-based businesses should be evaluated in light of today's changing technologies and the way people work. Recent state proposals on how home-based businesses are regulated have been proposed and, if adopted, should be incorporated into our regulations.
2. Permitting residences in business zones such as the SB zone on Nassau Street and the S1 and S-2 zones should be considered.
3. The permitted uses in the Township's service zones should be reviewed and inappropriate uses removed.
4. Both communities' flat/apartment ordinances should be reviewed to determine if they could be modified to encourage senior housing.

The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "local redevelopment and housing law," P.L. 1992, C. 79 (C.40A:12a-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

Princeton Borough adopted a Redevelopment Plan for Affordable Housing in 1986. The Borough's 1986 Redevelopment Plan was made a component of the Borough's 1990 court approved Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. This plan was amended in 1999 to permit construction of six units on Shirley Court site and six units on Maclean Street site. The units on Shirley Court and Maclean Street have been constructed and this redevelopment plan has been successfully implemented.

The Borough Council is considering whether a redevelopment plan pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et. seq. would be appropriate for the development of the surface parking lots in the downtown area. The Planning Board should consider whether other areas should also be considered.